

Remarks

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action of **November 15, 2004**.
Reexamination and reconsideration of **claims 1-23** is respectfully requested.

Summary of The Office Action

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Plakosh et al. (US 5,825,991).

Claims 1-7, 9-16 and 21-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kovnat et al (US 5,619,649).

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovnat et al. (US 5,619,649) in view of Morales, Jr. et al. (US 6,687,834).

Claims 17 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovnat et al. (US 5,619,649), in view of Ferlitsch et al. (US 2002/0113989).

Claims 18-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovnat et al. (US 5,619,649), and Ferlitsch et al. (US 2002/0113989), as applied to claims 17 above, and further in view of Morales, Jr. et al (US 6,687,834).

Status of Drawings

The formal drawings filed with the application have not been indicated as accepted or rejected. Applicant believes the drawings fully comply with all drawing requirements and respectfully inquires whether the drawings are accepted.

Objections to the Specification

The specification has been amended to correct the Abstract, which originally exceeded the word limit. A replacement Abstract has been provided that complies with the word limits. No new matter has been added.

The Present Claims Patentably Distinguish Over the References of Record

Claims 9-12, 21, and 22 have been canceled.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite an apparatus comprising a job ticket service and a work flow controller. The job ticket service is configured to function as a centralized service for controlling access to original job tickets and controls modification of the original job tickets. The work flow controller is configured to separately assign one or more tasks from a single original job ticket to selected task processors by distributing a ticket copy of the single original job ticket and distributing a job ticket reference to each selected task processor that identifies the single original job ticket and the job ticket service, where the selected task processors can include an external service provider. The amended language is supported by at least pages 4, 8, 9, and figure 4 of the present specification. Thus, no new matter has been added.

The references of record fail to teach or suggest the recited features of claim 1. For example, Plakosh describes a system for balancing CPU demands and decomposers that output decomposed image data (see abstract). Kovnat describes a printing system for processing job tickets but a user is responsible for modifying job tickets (column 13, lines 37-40 and column 14, lines 8-14). This is contrary to the claimed job ticket service where the job ticket service controls modification of the original job tickets.

Furthermore, Kovnat does not teach or suggest the centralized service for controlling access to original job tickets as claimed. For example, Kovnat states that once a job is delivered to output destinations, the job is not maintained in memory (column 14, lines 30-35). Additionally, none of the references teach or suggest a work flow controller that separately assigns tasks from a job ticket to different task processors.

Since claim 1 recites features not taught or suggested by the references, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the references. Accordingly, dependent claims 2-8 also patentably distinguish over the references and are in condition for allowance.


Additionally, dependent claim 5 recites assigning tasks based on bids, which is not taught or suggested by the references of record. For this additional reason, claim 5 patentably distinguishes over the references.

Independent claim 13 and newly added claim 23 include similar features as claim 1. Claims 13 and 23 also distinguish from the references for similar reasons as stated previously and are thus in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, **claims 1-8, 13-20, and 23** patentably and unobviously distinguish over the references of record and are now in condition for allowance. An early allowance of all claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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